



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

The exhibition of contemporary art which closes to-day at the Museum of Fine Arts has had some good representative pictures by the elder American artists, such as Vedder, Tilton, La Farge, and Church, as well as the sensations of the younger brood. The loan collection was tolerably rich in the best European art. Corots, Duprés, Diazes, Courbets, Daubignys and Millets were there in profusion. But it is expected that the formal opening next month of the new wing of the Museum, of which I shall send you an account, will be the loan exhibition that will for the first time adequately display the rare treasures of Boston's private collections. At the exhibition just closing nothing has excited more interest than the exhibitions of the schools of drawing and painting attached to the Art Museum here, to Yale, and to the Cooper Institute. The Yale school made by far the most brilliant and varied exhibition, though the drawings from the nude executed here contained a surprising amount of thoroughly good work.

GRETA.

MR. HADEN ON ETCHING.

LONDON, May 16, 1879.

THE three lectures recently delivered on "Etching," at the Royal Institution, by Mr. Seymour Haden, F.R.C.S., embraced the history, the practice, and the printing of etchings. Your readers are of course aware that Mr. Haden, by his reputation as an etcher, speaks with the very highest authority. His audience was an uncommon mixture of artists and professional men. He repeated the old poetic dictum, that the artist is "born, and not made;" study and cultivation may enhance, but cannot originate, artistic faculty.

To bold heterodoxies Mr. Haden is somewhat prone. He objected to academies and associations of any sort as "formative schools of art," as the originating faculty, the rarest of all, can but pine and wither under their influence, making one artist like another, and existing, not for art, but for the material interests of artists as guilds. In his opinion, where the intuitive art faculty existed, it could no more be developed and made to produce great works of art by academic association, than "Don Juan" could have been written by a committee. He considered the quality of "inception" inestimable. "The sacred fire soon burns down, and once allowed to languish cannot be fanned into flame." With his diatribe against South Kensington and its exact methods of instruction it is enough for me to protest my thorough disagreement. All his delicate, involved, and ample eulogy of etching was highly attractive, and was enhanced by a rude mother-wit quite his own. What good etching is was illustrated by reference to the works of Rembrandt, Claude, Vandyck, and Turner. The idea that an etching is good in proportion to the elaborate work in it was shown to be quite an error: generally, the more lines the worse the work; but it is the power of selection that marks the great etcher, and the amount of time expended is of no account, as the greater the effort the less interesting the result. The enormous growth of modern engraving, by the use of the steel plate, and the relations of the picture-dealer and the print-seller with the painter, in the production of some popular or eccentric picture, were relished by listeners, who had evidently at one time or the other been victims of such ambiguities. He was urgent that the Royal Academy should recognize the importance and art value of etching by electing etchers into their body.

Diagrams were exhibited showing the difference between the engraved line used by Schan, Durer, Marc Antonio, etc., and the etched line: the one as produced by the triangular, cutting edge of the tool called a burin, which removes a portion of the metal at each stroke; the other as effected by the corrosive action of a chemical agent upon the line, laid bare by the drawing of the point on the resin-coated plate. A third process employed by the teacher is that called "dry point," which is intermediate between the engraving proper and the etching by a chemical "mordant," and this consists in incising, roughening, and otherwise disturbing the surface of the plate by a sharp style, but without removing any portion of its substance. Mr. Haden illustrated the "continuous method," as he termed it, because it allows the drawing on the varnished plate to be done on the plate while in the bath. In this process your readers may not know that the biting-in agent is

a novelty, composed of chlorate of potass and hydrochloric acid, in the proportions by weight of four of chl. pot., 20; hyd. clor. and water, 76 parts.

The audience were treated to every step upon a zinc plate, on which Mr. Haden etched, for little more than a quarter of an hour, and then handed it to his assistant to clean off, so that the work might be seen. The great difference in form and properties between the line or "sulcus" (furrow) of engraved plates and those etched by the dry point, or the mordant, was explained by the diagrams. Several very beautiful examples of dry point, by Mr. Haden and other etchers, were exhibited. Both printing and paper were exhaustively commented upon.

In concluding, the lecturer in forcible terms pointed out how the profession of art was only too closely allied now with trade combinations, and that it would never regain its independence and self-respect, which have been lost, while thus shackled and intimidated. It was true its gains were out of all proportion to those of the learned professions. When he heard of 2000 guineas for a portrait, 3000 for a landscape, he rubbed his eyes and asked himself if he ought not to be getting 4000 guineas for curing a fever, 10,000 for a pleurisy, and 50,000 for saving a life! It was said that, abnormal as this seemed, it would still go on; but he was told that the high-pressure of the last fifteen years can no longer be kept up—that the inevitable reaction is setting in; the bubble, inflated to bursting, wants but a touch to be gone. "He would that these words could supply that touch, and that the days of art for art's sake could come back to us again."

HOLLAR.

THE CAPITOL ROTUNDA DECORATIONS.

THE visitor to the Capitol at Washington will find nothing there that will interest him more than the grand pictures of American history that Brumidi is painting on the walls of the rotunda, just beneath the upper gallery. About one fourth of the work is done, and the rest will take five years more to finish. A reporter for The Washington Post tells of a visit he paid the old artist in his studio, where the real work is done—a pleasant room, given up to casts, pictures and music. On the wall was laid off a frieze the exact width of that at the Capitol, and on this were sketched the figures. Here all the designs are made—first the cartoon, then the working drawing, which is afterwards transferred to the wall, thus leaving only the mechanical execution to be done at the Capitol. Indeed this is all that is possible, the artist being unable to get distance, the limited space keeping him close to his work. He paints about half a figure's width per day, and is obliged to finish as he goes, as nothing can be gone over. The utmost care is required to avoid showing where one day's work stopped and another began.

The designs for the work were all made sixteen years ago, and bring the history down to the discovery of gold in California. They show the Discovery by Columbus; Montezuma; Pizarro; De Soto; Pocahontas; the Pilgrims; William Penn; the Settling of New England; Oglethorpe and the Indians; the Battle of Lexington; the Surrender of Cornwallis; Decatur at Tripoli; the Death of Tecumseh; the Entry of Scott into Mexico; and, last, a great crowd of men with pickaxes and shovels, excited by the fever for gold—the brawny Argonauts of '49.

Brumidi came to this country in 1852. He is now an old man, but works with an enthusiasm that is surprising. The work of decorating the rotunda has long been a cherished plan with him.

WHEN the famous British artist Opie was first heard of, his fame rested on a very humble foundation. He was asked what he had painted to acquire him the village reputation he enjoyed. His answer was, "I ha' painted Duke William for the signs, and stars and sich-like for the boys' kites." Dr. Wolcot (Peter Pindar) told him some time after, that he should paint portraits, as the most profitable employment. "So I ha'; I ha' painted Farmer So-and-so, and neighbor Such-a-one, with their wives, and their eight or ten children." "And how much did you receive?" "Why, Farmer So-and-so said it were but right to encourage genius, and so he ga' me half a guinea." "Why, sir, you should get at least half a guinea for every head!"

"Oh, na; that winna do—it would ruin the country!" So strikingly humble and characteristic were the first steps of Opie.

ART WORK IN ST. LOUIS.

ST. LOUIS, May 25, 1879.

THE art work at Washington University is of especial interest, as being the beginning and the foundation of true art culture in St. Louis. The establishment of a department of art and design in connection with the university has always been a part of the plan, and when, four years ago, its artistic development passed into the care of Professor Halsey C. Ives its permanent growth began. Each summer Professor Ives has passed in Europe, making careful personal observation of the schools of art and design, and of industrial art on the continent, and in London. His years of earnest work are now beginning to give their results in the growing interest in art culture in our city. The organization of an Academy of Fine Arts in this city is a measure that has long been sought, but which was never till this year placed on a basis of assured success. Its object is the advancement of every department of art and the promotion of æsthetic culture by social reunions, instruction in art, public receptions and exhibitions. The magnificent academy now in process of erection here owes its origin to the preparatory work done by Professor Ives. The Washington University Art School now stands among the first in the United States. It is a means of art education to all who visit it, as well as to its special students. Every important work of art is now represented there by cast, autotype, or engraving, and the peculiarities of the various national schools can be studied here. Among the casts are the Discobolus of Myron, from the British Museum; the Fighting Gladiator, from the Louvre; portions of the frieze from the Parthenon; panels from the Ghiberti gates at Florence; Michael Angelo's Slave; and the Laocoon.

For the past three years free evening classes have been formed, to which have been given lessons in drawing and design, and lectures, on art history. These classes work from model and object, from the antique, and model draped. Eighty persons have availed themselves this year of this instruction, and in no instance has any pupil been admitted to the evening classes who could work during the day. A life class of twenty-four members has worked two evenings each week, from the nude model. This class, of course, is composed of artists, or advanced students in art. Lectures on artistic anatomy have been given each Friday evening. On Thursday evenings for eleven weeks there has been a course of art lectures, illustrated with the stereopticon. Over eight hundred new slides have been added this winter to illustrate these lectures, two hundred of which are from the South Kensington Museum Collection. The lectures this year have been very largely attended, and the audiences have been composed of our most critical and cultured citizens. The closing lecture of the course by Professor Ives, on "The Art Treasures of London," was, with its clear locations and stereopticon views of the principal objects of interest in history, architecture, and art, perhaps the finest lecture ever delivered in St. Louis.

The course of instruction in this department is original with Professor Ives, who has arranged it from a careful study of the leading art and industrial schools of Europe, and its results prove it peculiarly adapted to the development of any latent artistic talent. The work is divided into nine stages, commencing with geometric forms, which, it is believed, will cultivate that habit of accuracy in the pupil which will lead him to rely on his own judgment, and act as his own critic. In the first stage organic forms are employed as models. Then come solid bodies by means of elevation and action. Free-hand drawing is required from copies, memory, and dictation. Plant-forms are next employed, to which succeed drawing from the round or solid, both in outline and charcoal shading; then follows drawing from casts, and from the draped and nude model. Studies of single objects from nature precede composition, after which come painting in sepia, water-colors, and oil.

It is to our schools of art and design that we must look for a definite centre around which shall crystallize that nebulous interest in art that characterizes this period.

LILIAN WHITING.